

## NAVASSA ISLAND

### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A physical description of Navassa Island is contined in U.S. Navy, Hydrographic Office Publication No. 128, Section 7C-4. A brief excerpt follows:

"Navassa Island (18° 24' North, 75° 01' West), 250 feet high, lies about 30 miles westward of Cap des Irois, the western extremity of Haiti. It is about 2 miles long, northwest to southeast, and nearly 1 mile wide. Its summit, which is covered with stunted palm trees and cactus, is level and its sides slope down steeply and merge into white cliffs, about 20 feet high. The island is inaccessible except from Lulu Bay. A light is shown on the island near the summit."

Geographically, Navassa is an island of the West Indies, of the Caribbean Sea, and also of the Greater Antilles. It has a humid tropic climate. It is in the area of the trade winds.

### HUMAN HABITATION

There are no permanent inhabitants on the island. The United States Coast Guard maintains one 7000 candle power light on Navassa Island (List of Lights, U.S. Hydrographic Office Publication No. 30, page 194). The lighthouse there is an automatic one, though formerly it had a keeper. The island is administred by the U.S. Coast Guard.

### LEGAL STATUS

The island of Navassa was bonded as a guano island on August 31, 1858. The Guano Act, an Act of Congress of August 18, 1856, is published in Volume 11, United States Statutes at Large, page 119; and Sections 5570 and 5578 of the Revised Statutes. The text of the Act in its present form may be found in the U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 7(4), and Title 48, Sections 1411-1419.

By a Proclamation of the President of the United States dated January 17, 1916, the island was declared to be under the sole and exclusive jurisdiction of the United States and out of the jurisdiction of any other Government; and by the same instrument the island was proclaimed to be reserved for lighthouse purposes. A light was established in 1917. A copy of the Presidential Proclamation may be found in Volume 39, United States Statutes at Large, page 1763.

-2-

A discussion of Navassa Island, including its relations to the Guano Act, may be found in Volume I, Moore A Digest of International Law, pages 568 and 577-78, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1906. A further discussion may be found in Volume I, Hackworth Digest of International Law, pages 512-513, Department of State publication 1506, Government Printing Office, 1940.

The United States Government formally reserves its rights of sovereignty over Navassa Island. A claim by the Government of Haiti to Navassa Island has not been recognized by the United States.

#### PUBLIC INFORMATION

Information about leasing or ownership of land on the island can be obtained from the legal section of the U.S. Coast Guard. Any contemplated visit to the island should be discussed beforehand by communication with the Commander, Seventh Coast Guard, Miami, Florida, who is in charge of local regulations pertaining to Navassa.